

## **THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF SPECTACLE MAKERS**

The Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers is a City of London Livery Company entirely dedicated to eye health, and the oldest optical organisation in the world. The name comes from the Company's Royal Charter of 1629 when the only thing that could be done to help vision was to make spectacles. Today, we have around 860 members, covering more than 40 different job roles, across 16 countries. Around 80% have a direct connection with vision care or sight loss but we are open to all. We're proud to be a forward-looking, multidisciplinary organisation with one clear mission: **to support better vision for all.**

The Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers is now seeking an experienced and highly-organised individual to take office as Clerk (CEO) on the retirement of the incumbent, after ten years' service. As the Company prepares to celebrate its 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the end of this decade, principal objectives for the new Clerk to the Company will be to build on the achievements and growth in membership of the last few years, to see the Company through the celebratory programme and deliver the Company's longer term strategy, as set by its Court. It is hoped that the successful candidate will join the Company at the end of September 2025 to facilitate a smooth handover of responsibilities by December 2025.

### **Overview of the position**

The role of Clerk is the Company's de facto CEO. This senior executive position is central to the functioning of the Company and requires a hands-on approach to a diverse range of operational, strategic and ceremonial duties. Reporting directly to the Master and Wardens, the Clerk is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Company and its associated committees and working groups. The Clerk is currently supported by a full time Assistant, contractors providing Beadle/Toastmaster and management accounting support services, and by volunteer members of the Company. A 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary programme co-ordinator is expected to be added to the team from the end of 2025, to be managed by the Clerk.

### **The Company**

Founded by Royal Charter in 1629, WCSM is the oldest optical organisation in the world today and the only City of London livery company dedicated to eye health. The principal purpose of the Company is to support better vision for all. The Company is "open" ie membership is not restricted to those working in eye health or sight loss. There are around 860 members, mainly across the UK but with increasing international representation. They are united in the belief that nobody should be held back by poor vision. As the Company approaches its 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary, communicating the purposes of the Company and maintaining strong individual membership and corporate support will be key in generating the income needed to fund the Company's activities and secure its future over the long term.

### **Key elements of the role**

- Managing the activities of the Company on a day-to-day basis, actively implementing the strategic decisions of the Court, supporting its Committees and working groups and ensuring that the Company's operating and IT systems remain current and fit for purpose.
- Day-to-day financial management, including budgeting, cashflow, risk identification mitigation strategies, ensuring the filing of statutory returns and authorisation of invoices as required; principal signatory (subject to approved authority limits and controls set by the Finance Committee).

- Line management of staff and managing supplier and contractual relationships to ensure the Company has appropriate resources to support its activities.
- Acting as Secretary to the Court, the Senior Court and key Company committees and task groups (currently Master's and Wardens' Meetings, Finance and Investment Committees, REM (Professorial) Group and Think Tank) - preparing agendas, papers and minutes and ensuring completion of actions.
- Supporting the Master's ambassadorial role within the Livery, the City and the eye health sector, including providing briefings, accompanying the Master to meetings and functions both during the day and in the evenings, and managing potential diary conflicts.
- Managing and promoting the admission to Company membership of Freemen and Liverymen and providing administrative services to support the growth and success of the Corporate Supporter scheme.
- Administration of the Company's Research Medals programmes and associated PR, to support the Chair of the Company's professorial REM Group.
- Day-to-day co-ordination of activities leading up to the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Company and legacy work resulting from that programme.
- Building strong relationships across the City and Livery, eye health professions and sight loss and charity sectors.
- Actively engaging with other City Livery Companies and the Fellowship of Clerks of the City of London to maintain the Company's reputation within the Livery and fostering relationships with officers and contacts in the City of London Corporation.
- Maintaining good relationships with optical bodies and associations to retain the Company's strong connection to its original craft (eye health)
- Acting as the principal point of contact for the Company's affiliated service regiments and squadrons
- Co-ordination of the activities of the Company, The Spectacle Makers' Charity (registered in England and Wales no. 1186122) and The Spectacle Makers' Society. The Assistant to the Clerk currently acts as Secretary of the Membership Committee and Honorary Secretary to the Committee of the Spectacle Makers' Society.
- Detailed organisation and financial management of all Company functions (the annual Livery Dinner, four Court lunches a year, the annual Spectacle Makers' Lecture, the annual Presentation & Awards Evening, the annual Court Dinner, the Annual Service of Remembrance, Thanksgiving and Rededication and professional visits and events).
- Providing continuity as custodian of the Company's history and traditions and keeper of all corporate and membership records
- Ensuring compliance with all relevant laws, regulatory undertakings and Company and Charity reporting arrangements and implementing any required changes in governance.
- Management of communication flows within the Company and externally.
- Acting as confidant and adviser to the Master and other Court and Committee members, briefing the Master, Wardens and Court and members of the Company on matters of interest within the City Civic and advising on City and Livery protocol.
- Maintenance and insurance of Company treasures and regalia.
- Principal point of contact with insurance brokers, bankers, investment managers, external accountants, property, legal and other advisers.

## Personal qualities and skills required

	Essential	Desirable
Excellent communication skills, with strong attention to detail; must be able to represent the Company and communicate its core values and key messages in person and across all channels	E	
Experience of providing high-level administrative support to Boards/ senior committees or governing bodies	E	
Significant commercial experience gained in a public, charity or private sector organisation	E	
Able and willing to travel and work in the City of London both during the day and in the evening	E	
Flexibility to manage working hours to meet the demands of the role	E	
Financially and IT-literate; daily user of all Microsoft Office packages; familiar with databases, member management systems and/or accounting software	E	
Commitment to the Company's core values of inclusivity, impartiality independence and improvement of vision	E	
Record of success in attracting and retaining members and/or financial support		D
Experience of running large-scale events or meetings (c 200 people)		D
Understanding of legal and charity compliance		D
Experience of hands-on working in a small team, and working with and for volunteers	E	
Confident and warm public persona, able to build and maintain a network of strong business, Court and member relationships	E	
Comfortable with ceremonial duties and issues of protocol	E	
Understanding of/interest in both the history and traditions, and the contemporary role, of the City and the Livery		D
Ability to juggle workload and adapt to change with each new team of Master and Wardens;	E	
Forward-looking approach, suggesting and promoting new initiatives and improvements	E	

The Clerk will be expected over time to develop a general understanding of major issues affecting eye health/sight loss. No prior technical or professional knowledge is required.

## Salary and benefits

The salary will be £75,000. This is a busy full-time role, with most activities taking place within the City of London. Some home-working may be possible depending on the Clerk's and the Master's schedule but candidates should expect to work 5 days a week from the Company's London office in Blackfriars.

A flexible approach to the days and hours worked will be essential to support the Company's busy schedule of meetings, professional, ceremonial and social events. The role involves evening events and occasional weekend duties for which time off in lieu may be taken at quieter times.

The Company provides a non-contributory pension scheme, an interest-free season ticket or commuting loan following completion of a 3-month probationary period, and 30 days' holiday, of which 10 days must be taken in the period from mid-July to the end of August.

## **Equal Opportunities**

WCSM is committed to a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion in which all individuals are treated equitably, and where they can realise their potential in the service of the Company. The Company will not discriminate (negatively or positively) on the grounds of age, gender, ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender expression, marital or civil partnership status, parental status, race or religion. Shortlisting of applicants will be based on an assessment of skills and experience from each candidate's CV and covering letter.

## **How to Apply**

To apply, please send a CV and 1-page covering letter, setting out the reasons for your interest and your suitability for the role, to [recruitment@spectaclemakers.com](mailto:recruitment@spectaclemakers.com).

The closing date for applications is Monday 31 March 2025 (12 noon).

Interviews will be held in May. The Master and Wardens expect to confirm the appointment by the end of June.

The current Clerk will be retiring towards the end of the year. It is hoped that the successful candidate will join the Company at the end of September 2025 to facilitate a smooth handover of responsibilities.